Happy Thanksgiving

TRIBUNE-COURIER

RICHLAND COUNTY'S ONLY LOCALLY-OWNED NEWSPAPER • SINCE 1961

news@tribune-courier.com 11.26.26



NECIC opens GROW, a North End grocery store

The North End Community Improvement Collaborative (NECIC) opened GROW by NECIC, a neighborhood grocery store and community gathering space, with a three-day celebration Nov. 20–22. The weekend began with a ribbon cutting Friday. The first 20 customers received a free tote bag filled with items from GROW.

Located in the former bank at Springmill and Bowman streets, at 486 Springmill St., Mansfield, GROW will carry produce grown just down the road at the NECIC Urban Farm, along with local meats, cheeses and other dairy products, baked goods, specialty groceries and gifts.

Inside, Braxton Charles Daniels III will operate a smaller, second pop-up location of The 101 Tea Company, with its own menu of coffee and specialty beverages for the North End. Customers can order inside or at the walk-up window. The building also houses NECIC's offices and NECIC Staffing's Mansfield office.

The store and café will also serve as settings for youth mentorship. Through its Joe Mudra Mentoring Model (J3M), NECIC will work with Richland County Juvenile Court to give young people opportunities to build skills and gain hands-on experience in a workplace while receiving guidance from mentors.

The opening marks the culmination of a year of work by NECIC to revitalize the Springmill and Bowman corridor and invest in Mansfield's North End. Along with renovating the former bank, bringing the North End Farmers Market to the site and unveiling the Greenhouse Dreams mural, NECIC worked with neighbors and volunteers earlier this year to improve the blocks around 486 Springmill St.

During Springmill Spring Cleanup Week, NECIC staff, neighbors, and volunteers from several organizations donated their time to pick up litter, help other neighbors with projects around their homes and paint fire hydrants.



"Over the past year, we've seen what can happen when people give their time to a neighborhood they care about," said Matthew Benko-Scruggs, President and CEO of NECIC. "That work happened inside this building and out on the blocks around it. Now we get to open the doors and give neighbors a place to buy food grown down the street, catch up over coffee and feel at home on the North End."

On Saturday, shoppers could meet Santa and Mrs. Claus, see live reindeer and enjoy a tree lighting, children's crafts, hot chocolate, food trucks and music.

Saturday also kicked-off the Gingerbread Trail, presented by

(Continued on Page 11)

Fire department collecting toys

The Springfield Township Fire Department will be joining the holiday festivities at the Ontario Christmas Village & Tree Lighting on Dec. 3, from 5:30–8 pm.

The event will be held at the band shell at Marshall Park, Ontario.

Fire department crew members will be on-site collecting toys for the Ontario Toy Drive. Donations of new, unwrapped toys will be collected for all ages.

Hot cocoa will be served and those attending can visit Santa, see live performances, visit live reindeer, make s'mores and make crafts.

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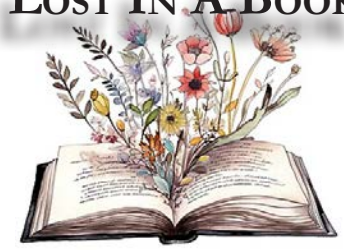
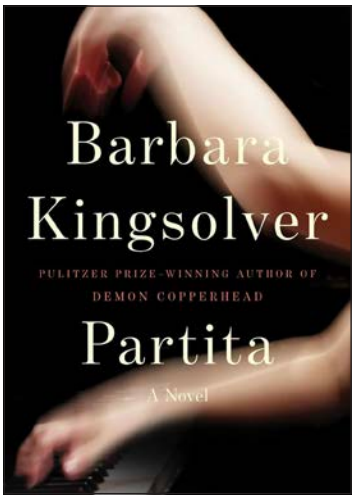
Lost In A Book



A Book Review
By Amanda Belczak



Nobody except Barbara Kingsolver make me love a book about a classical pianist. Can I tell you how much I care about classical piano? zero percent. Can I tell you how much I appreciated this book? 5/5

If you know Barbara Kingsolver's work, you know she can weave together a beautiful story because her characters have dreams and depth, and pain. They are also worth redeeming even after mistakes and heartbreak.

In *Partita*, Livia is a country girl from Tennessee whose talent and effort on the piano earned her a university scholarship and the rare ability to escape her small town and complicated family.

The story flashes back and forth between Livia's young years of promise and the much later years of life when her mother had died and left her piles of hoarding to clean out of her childhood home.

Little by little we learn about her promising future, a reckless love story, painful tragedies and new beginnings.

I highly recommend the audiobook as it often layers in classical piano under the reading.

If you loved *Demon Copperhead* or *Tom Lake* by Ann Patchett, this is a good book for you.

My rating: ★★★★★

Follow my blog at amandabelczak.com

Scam caller is pretending to be chamber

Richland Area Chamber & Economic Development announced a scam that has been happening locally.

Phone calls are coming from someone falsely claiming to be Jennifer Wagner with the Richland Area Chamber & Economic Development. The caller asks businesses to buy advertising or publications. Wagner has not made any calls like this, and the chamber is not behind them.

Anyone who receives a call like this should not share payment or personal information.

Call the chamber's office first at 419-522-3211, and office personnel will be able to tell whether the request is legit.

Anyone wo has already given payment information to this caller should contact their bank or credit card company right away to cancel payment.

Jessica Gribben, Richland Area Chamber & Economic Development President & CEO, said, "If a call or email ever seems off, please let the chamber know."

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The Entertainment Examiner

— By Ian Stumbo —

I Play Rocky is a certified crowd pleaser and one of the few movies to earn a rare A+ on CinemaScore.

Anthony Ippolito absolutely disappears into the role of a young Sylvester Stallone nailing his mannerisms, look and especially voice.



He should garner awards consideration. This movie also comes out on the 50th anniversary of the original Rocky.

Struggling actor Mike Stallone has a deep passion for acting though cannot seem to get the roles he craves. While working at a movie theater, he meets Sasha (AnnaSophia Robb), who will become his wife, and he turns his talents to writing while going by his given name, Sylvester.

Producers Irwin Winkler and Robert Chartoff at United Artists are wonderfully played by P.J. Byrne and Toby Kebbell. They want anyone else other than Stallone to play the lead role and offered him insane amounts of money to cast another actor, though Stallone persisted and history was made.

The movie chronicles Stallone struggling coming of age in New York and then his move to Los Angeles trying to get his scripts seen.

Jay Duplass is also great as the movie's director John Avildsen. Director Peter Farrelly who directed the Oscar winning *Green Book* does a fine job guiding this film.

The more I think about *I Play Rocky* the more I like what a great movie it is about an actor's life story and also a really in depth behind the scenes look at one of the most iconic films of the 1970s.

Anthony Ippolito nails his performance as Stallone. This movie deserves to be seen and is consistently interesting and absorbing from beginning to end.

★★★★



Sundre, Alberta, Canada • Photo By Mark Shutt

Tribune-Courier Forum

The Ontario Lions Club is grateful to all the businesses and volunteers who made the annual fall pancake day a success on Saturday, Nov. 14. Among those who donated door prizes or helped in other ways are Donatos Pizza, Olive Garden, Athens Greek Restaurant, Meraki Salon, the *Tribune-Courier,* Ray Chase, ABC Warerhouse, Reflections Salon & Spa, Raising Cane's, Arnold's Garden Center, The Cap Place, Goodyear Auto Service, Tractor Supply, Mid Ohio Mind, Body & Soul, Brian and Michelle Gates State Farm Insurance, Park National Bank, Patriot Fire Protection, Advantage Credit Union and Arbor Creek.

News Briefs

Nominations are open for the Madison Rams Athletic Hall of Fame Class of 2027. This marks the fifth year honoring the remarkable individuals and teams who've shaped Madison's legacy. To nominate athletes, coaches, teams or community members fill out the form at https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1suzNw71LmwWuh3M-vw6l-zLhe6eNDOWbJA0qHp7jI86A/viewform?edit_requested = true or https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1yXml2o2wkz1d2B3A47n9_nAG-ITbF2WHObS7zyfqOx9c/viewform?edit_requested = true

★

The closure of West Hanley Road, on both sides of the U.S. 42 intersection, which was set to begin Nov. 30, has been cancelled. The signal upgrade work will still occur, however, traffic will be maintained by flaggers.

★

Clear Fork Alliance Church, 1008 St. Rt. 97 E., Bellville, will once again host "Experience Bethlehem" this December.

Those attending can enjoy the sights and sounds of ancient Bethlehem, taste foods in the marketplace, see and hear soldiers in the streets, meet the animals in the stable and follow the star to the manger and the newborn King. Other activities include games and a live nativity.

The experience will be open Friday, Dec. 11 from 6:30–8:30 pm; Saturday, Dec. 12 from 6:30–8:30 pm; and Sunday, Dec. 13 from 2–4 pm. Admission is free. The entire event takes place inside and is handicap accessible and family friendly.

Clear Fork Alliance Church is located across the street from Clear Fork High School. Call the church office at 419-886-4333 or visit clearforkalliance.org for more information.

★

The City of Ontario December meeting schedule includes Dec. 2, 5 pm streets committee, 5:15 pm economic development, 5:30 pm, finance committee of the whole, 6:15 pm caucus and 7 pm, council; Dec. 9, 1 pm, civil service commission and 4 pm, planning commission; and Dec. 16, 6:15 pm, caucus and 7 pm, council.

Meetings are held at 555 Stumbo Rd., Ontario.

★

The Lexington Area Senior Citizens Inc., invites those 55 and older to attend meetings the third Wednesday of every month at 11:30 am at Der Dutchman, Rt. 97, Bellville. Cost is $17 for the meal, with an additional $2 for pie.

The next meal will be Dec. 16, which is the Christmas luncheon. The Fun Center Chordsmen will provide entertainment.

The group will also meet for lunch on Wednesday, Dec. 2, at 11 am, at El Puerto Vallarta Mexican Bar & Grill on N. Lexington Springmill Rd., Ontario.

For information visit the Facebook page at Lexington Area Senior Citizens (LASC). Dues are $10 per year.

★

To submit a news brief item send information to news@tribune-courier.com. To advertise email tribune.courier.traci@gmail.

Scholarships available through DAR

Various local, state and national scholarships are available through the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR).

The Jared Mansfield Chapter local scholarship is open to all students, both genders, who will be attending OSU-Mansfield, NCSC, or the Dwight Schar College of Nursing, Mansfield and pursuing any field of study. The scholarship is open to any student currently enrolled at any of the above schools, as well as, high school graduating seniors. This scholarship is renewable and the student may apply each year. Call scholarship chair Joedy Studer at 419-631-1015 for more information. The completed application must be postmarked by April 15.

The Ohio Society Daughters of the American Revolution awards the "Wings of Eagles" scholarship to graduating high school seniors, including those completing a certified home school program, in the amount of $1,000 each. Awards are based on academic excellence and financial need.

All applicants must be citizens of the United States and legal residents of the state of Ohio and must attend an accredited college or university in the United States. Visit OSDAR at ohiodar.org to obtain a scholarship application. All applicants must be sponsored by the local DAR chapter and applications must be submitted to the local chapter by Jan. 31.

The National Daughters of the American Revolution, NSDAR, also offers scholarships in many different majors. This year all students will submit their applications using an online process. The online portal can be found at http://dar.academicworks.com. Emailed or mailed applications will no longer be accepted. The deadline for these is Jan. 31.

St. Peter's will host 40th Annual Christmas Classic fundraiser

The 40th Annual Christmas Classic will be held on Sunday Dec. 6, from 12:30–3:30 pm in the St. Peter's High School cafeteria and auditorium, 104 W. First St., Mansfield.

The Christmas Classic is one of the biggest bake sales in the state of Ohio. It is also a day of music, merriment and the largest fundraiser for the Spartan Family Association, St. Peter's equivalent of PTA.

Donations from this event provide grants for the school field trips, teacher appreciation gifts, academic programs, facility updates, professional development and any other activities that enhance learning.

During the Christmas Classic visitors can see Santa Claus, buy a lunch from the volleyball team, participate in the secret Santa workshop, enter a chance to win raffle baskets, buy baked goods and hear performances from the St. Peter's students.

The schedule includes: 12:30 pm, mini singers (elementary choir); 1 pm, 2–5 grade; 1:20 pm, Montessori preschool; 1:40 pm, kindergarten and first grade; 2 pm, 6–12 grad choir; 2:30 pm, first year blue band; and 2:50 pm, Spartan Band.

All of the performances will be held in the Bob Frye auditorium on the 2nd floor of the high school.



Thanksgiving: *Have an Attitude of Gratitude*

By Bryan Golden

Thanksgiving is much more than a big meal with family and friends. It's a time to reflect on, and be thankful for, all of the good things you have.

It's important to be grateful, not just on Thanksgiving, but each and every day. Rather than lamenting what you feel is lacking in your life, begin each new day by developing an attitude of gratitude. Take inventory of your blessings and you will be surprised at just how much you have to be thankful for.

If you have enough to eat, a place to live, a way to get around, people who care about you or people you care about, then you are wealthy. If you lack any of these elements, you must still be grateful for what you do have, while striving to obtain whatever is absent.

Focus on all positive aspects of your life. Take nothing for granted. Every morning, recharge your appreciation. Be happy for everything there is, not upset over what you feel is missing.

Dreams of the future shouldn't diminish appreciation for the present. If all you do is concentrate on what you want, you won't enjoy today. Don't be jealous of others; what they do or have has no bearing on you.

You can feel bitter or resentful for a variety of reasons. Perhaps you feel something is missing from your life, things aren't going your way, or you have been treated unfairly. You may wonder, "why do these things always happen to me?"

Life's problems tend to dominate your thoughts, turning your focus to what you feel is wrong. You may start to resent those who appear to be better off. You're apt to dwell on things you think would make your life better if you had them. If only you had more money, more time, a bigger house, a different car, a different job, a different boss, had picked a different career, etc.

Once your attitude becomes one of deficiency instead of abundance and appreciation, you can become overwhelmed by feelings of frustration and feel like a victim. As this happens, a consuming vicious cycle starts.

Being bitter or resentful blows situations out of proportion. People who are bitter frequently find that their situations deteriorate and their mental and physical health decays.

It's difficult, if not impossible, to achieve your goals while you are bitter or resentful. Regardless of what challenges might befall you, bitterness makes finding solutions much more elusive.

There is no point to feeling bitter since it accomplishes nothing, harms you and makes things worse. Filling yourself with gratitude on a daily basis makes you feel good, while driving out negative feelings.

(Continued on Page 6)

Church Directory

All Souls Unitarian Universalist
25 Church St., Bellville
419-886-3497 • www.allsoulsuuohio.org
10:30 am Service and Sunday School
Adult RE Book Club (quarterly)

First Congregational Church
640 Millsboro Rd., Mansfield
419-756-3046 • www.mansfieldfcc.com
Pastor Brad Bunn
8:30 am Chapel • 10:30 am Sanctuary
10:30 am Sunday School (nursery–high school)
10 am Monday Morning Bible Study

Lexington Church of the Cross
236 Otterbein Dr., Lexington
419-884-2150 • Churchofthecrosslex.com
Pastor-Rev. Dr. Edna Stahl
Sunday Worship 9:30 am
Junior Church for 10 and under • Wesley Class 10:45
5th Sunday of the month-Do Something Sunday AA, Girl Scouts, Yoga, Knotty Ladies and Bible Study.

Ontario United Methodist Church
3540 Park Avenue West., Ontario
419-529-4345 • ontarioumc.com
Rev. J.P. Snyder
9:30 am Grace & Eggs
11 am Sunday Worship and Kingdom Kids

St. John's United Church of Christ
2010 Park Avenue West, Mansfield
(At Hope Lutheran Next to Drug Mart)
419-522-2813 • www.stjohnsmansfield.org
contact@stjohnmansfield.org
Pastor Faith Proietti • 11 am Sunday Worship
Office hours: Mon–Fri 9 am to 1 pm
AA Meetings M & F 10 am & noon;
Wed. noon Brown Bag and Sat. 6 pm

Trinity Grace Fellowship
1592 Grace St., Mansfield
419-589-5890 • trinitygracefellowship.org
Pastor Larry Carnes
9:30 am Sunday Worship • 11 am Sunday School
Bible Study Mondays 2 pm

G & M Body & Paint Shop
1689 West Fourth St., Ontario • 419-529-2747

Wappner Funeral Home
Mansfield • Ontario • Ashland • 419-522-5211

Obituary Listings for Wappner Funeral Directors & Crematory

Sherryl "Sherry" Lynn Crabtree, November 15
Catherine Marie Wagner, November 17

View full obituaries at www.wappner.com



Mechanics Way of Excellence Award recipients announced

Mechanics Bank has announced Amie Mutti, Mady Myers, Tequella Schoenman, Kennedy Smedley and Curt Walter have been awarded the Mechanics Way of Excellence Award.

The award is presented to Mechanics employees who best exemplify the company's mission – "to pursue excellence in every possible way to enrich the lives of people and the communities we serve." The award is presented on a peer nomination basis.



Amie Mutti

Amie Mutti joined Mechanics in 2005 and serves as an Investment Executive.

Mutti attended North Central State College and holds a bachelor's degree from Kidron College. Additionally, she holds Series 6, Series 7 and Series 66 investment licenses in addition to licenses in life, health and annuity products.

She is a member of the Mansfield Rotary Club and volunteers with Rubies Womens Group.



Mady Myers

Mady Myers joined Mechanics in 2020 and serves as an Administrative Assistant. Mady holds an associate's degree from North Central State College in Business Management.

She serves on the Board of Directors for the Kiwanis Club of Mansfield, as a volunteer mentor for Mid-Ohio Youth Mentoring, and on the Allocations Committee for United Way of Richland County.



Tequella Schoenman

Tequella Schoenman joined Mechanics in 2021 and serves as Assistant Manager of Loan Administration.

Schoenman holds a bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Franklin University and is a certified DiSC facilitator. She is a volunteer mentor for Mid-Ohio Youth Mentoring and serves on the Allocations Committee for United Way of Richland County.



Kennedy Smedley

Kennady Smedley joined Mechanics in 2021 and serves as Assistant Branch Manager at the Madison Office.

Smedley holds a bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Ashland University.

Curt Walter joined Mechanics in 2021 and serves as a Mortgage Loan Officer.



Curt Walter

Walter has over 18 years of management experience and holds a bachelor's degree from Oregon State University. He serves on the Allocations Committee for United Way of Richland County.

The Mechanics Way of Excellence Award is the company's most prestigious recognition of performance.

Mechanics Bank is an independent, community bank located in Richland and Ashland counties with ten convenient locations.

Mechanics Bank recently celebrated 140 years of serving the local community. The downtown Mansfield location opened at the corner of Park Avenue and Main St. in 1886.





ALTRUSA CLUB OF MANSFIELD suppoted early literacy by giving Madison Early Childhood Learning Center money for books to support the curriculum. Altrusa member Candy Brenner presents a check to Madison Early Childhood Learning Center Director Lindi Holfinger and administrative assistant Daniella Gitto.

•Thanksgiving: *Have an Attitude of Gratitude*

(Continued from Page 4)

Begin your practice of gratitude each morning as soon as you wake. Every day is a great day. If you have any doubts, try missing one. Take inventory of everything, no matter how small or seemingly insignificant, that is good in your life.

If it helps, make a written list of all things you are grateful for. Read your list every day. As you do this, you will build and reinforce your attitude of gratitude. Don't waste any time with what you feel you don't have.

Keep things in perspective. Consider all the people who have overcome difficulties far worse than yours. Don't be consumed by your problems, there is always a solution. Maintaining an attitude of gratitude allows your mind to devise a resolution for your circumstances.

Make everyday a day of Thanksgiving and you will be amazed how much better your life will become.

Bryan Golden is the author of *Dare to Live Without Limits.* Contact Bryan at Bryan@columnist.com or visit www.DareToLiveWithoutLimits.com.



Seniors invited to celebration

Mansfield UMADAOP and We ACT will co-host SPARK Senior Day, a special holiday celebration dedicated to senior citizens throughout Mansfield and Richland County. SPARK stands for Self-discovery, Purpose, Achievement, Resilience, Knowledge

The event will take place on Friday, Dec. 11, from 11 am to 2 pm at Ohio District 5 Area Agency on Aging, Inc., Hawkins Conference Center, 2131 Park Avenue West, Suite 500, Ontario, with doors opening early at 10:45 am to welcome guests into a warm, cheerful atmosphere.

SPARK Senior Day is designed to bring the community together for a joyful Christmas gathering.

Attendees will be treated to a delicious, complimentary holiday meal, live music, and high-energy games of bingo with exciting prizes. It is the perfect opportunity for area seniors to socialize, celebrate the season, and enjoy a vibrant, uplifting afternoon.

This event is proudly sponsored by the Ohio District 5 Area Agency on Aging, Inc., an organization dedicated to supporting and enriching the lives of older adults in the region.

While there is no cost to attend, seating for this celebration is limited. Organizers strongly encourage area seniors to reserve their spots as soon as possible by calling 419-930-4263.

Toys being collected for local children

Buckeye Superstore in Shelby is partnering JPB Professional Marketing in Mansfield, Ally Bank and the Empire Jeepers Club for the 3rd Annual "Fill the Promaster" Toy Drive, collecting new, unwrapped toys and gifts to benefit local youth navigating the foster care system through Richland County Children Services (RCCS).

"For children who have experienced the upheaval of being separated from their families, the holidays can sometimes feel more overwhelming than joyful," said Brigitte Coles, Community Engagement Supervisor for Richland County Children Services.

Community members are invited to drop off new, unwrapped toys, games, books or gift cards.

The drive is focusing on all age groups, from infants needing comfort toys to teenagers who appreciate gift cards, tech accessories and games.

Donations will be accepted through Saturday, Dec. 5, at Buckeye Superstore, 278 Mansfield Ave., Shelby; Shelby Fire Department, 40 High School Ave., Shelby; Premier Tanning and Nutrition, 35 Mansfield Ave., Shelby; House of Pieces, 2031 Park Avenue West, Ontario; and Shelby Eagles, 46 E. Main St., Shelby.

For information call 567-333-8581.

Galion Civil Air Patrol Cadets visit Galion Municipal Airport

Thirty-one cadets from the Galion City Schools Cadet Squadron visited Galion Municipal Airport on Monday, Nov. 16.

The cadets were from grades 6 through 9, They listened to multimedia-enhanced talks about aviation and the history of the B-29. Afterwards, they explored several planes and spoke to the plane owners. Finally, a B-29 auxiliary power unit used on the B-29 was demonstrated. A series of programs for Galion students are planned.

The program was planned by Brian Gale and Joe Nastasi, as part of a new public outreach program at the local airport. It was coordinated with Brian Kentosh of Galion City schools. Joe Nastasi gave a talk about the broad range of aviation careers that are available, then discussed learning how to fly. This included options like the Sport Pilot certificate, which requires fewer hours when compared to a Private Pilot license. He also discussed the various scholarship programs available that can partially or fully fund flight instruction.

During the talk, Mr. Nastasi showed clips of some of his flights, over the Ohio River, landing on short grass runways, and flying an ultralight five feet over a crop of corn! Next up was a video showing a flight of one of two B-29 bombers still flying, nicknamed FiFi.

Mr. Jim Graham, of Graham Aviation, talked about his experience repairing B-29s. Jim was recently awarded the Charles Taylor Master Mechanic Award by the Federal Aviation Administration for 50 years of service to aviation.

Brian Gale and Joe Nastasi are certificated Sport Pilots whose mission is to connect the surrounding communities with the Galion Municipal Airport. Mr. Nastasi has featured flights at Galion on his YouTube channel, "Aviator Joe." Brian Gale owns two planes, including an historic 1946 Ercoupe.









Support Local Coffee Shops

Visit a featured location below, then email your order and visit date to tribune.courier.traci@gmail.com for a chance to win a $20 coffee gift card!

Goldberry Roasting Company
1262 Franklin Ave, Ashland
goldberryroasting.com

Bloom Nutrition & Drink Bar
126 East Main Street,
W 2nd St Rear, Ashland

4th Street Coffee House
1996 W 4th St, Ontario

Pump and Grind
586 Park Avenue East,
OH-430, Mansfield

ADVERTISE HERE

Fresh Grounds Coffee House
1621 W 4th St, Ontario

Brew'd Coffee & Donuts
7 Main St, Hayesville

Bubble Bean And Sweets
44 East Main St., Shelby

ADVERTISE HERE

Revive Coffee Bar
1201 Mill Rd, Bellville
revivecoffeebar.com

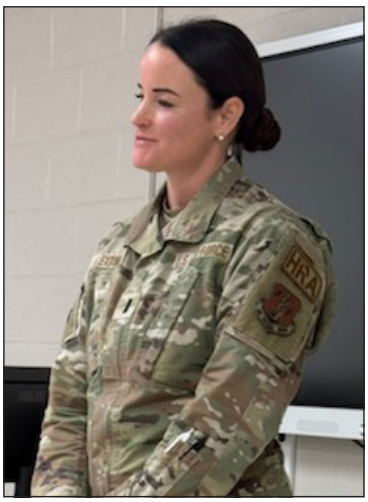
ADVERTISE HERE

The Cafe at Arbor Creek Gardens and Floral
3052 Mabee Rd, Ontario

Honey B Express Coffee Trailer
567-303-5248

Pronto Pizza and Coffee
914 Ashland Rd, Mansfield
419-589-7777

The Green Bean House
230 Main St, Bellville
419-719-6026
@thegreenbeanhouse



ONTARIO HIGH SCHOOL'S second Career Speaker Series session focused on military careers. Students explored military pathways with Alecia Extine, Air Guard Wing Executive Officer; Matthew Bulanda, Squadron Commander of the 179th Logistics Readiness Squadron; Sergeant Hunt, U.S. Army Recruiter; two student Navy recruits; and Ontario's very own principal, Chris Smith, an Army National Guard veteran. The Career Speaker Series takes place every second and fourth Wednesday in Room, 111, giving students opportunities to explore careers and connect with professionals.

Ohio House Republicans select Marilyn John as speaker pro tempore

Members of the Ohio House Republican Caucus have re-elected Matt Huffman (R-Lima) as Speaker of the Ohio House and selected Representative Marilyn John (R-Richland County) to serve as speaker pro tempore for the upcoming General Assembly.

Representative John, who represents Ohio's 76th House District, will take on an expanded leadership role while continuing her commitment to serving the people of Richland County and communities throughout her district.

The speaker pro tempore serves as the temporary presiding officer of the Ohio House in the Speaker's absence. In this capacity, Representative John will help oversee House proceedings, maintain order during legislative sessions, and ensure the continued operation of the chamber's legislative business.

"I am truly honored and humbled by the confidence my colleagues have placed in me to serve as Speaker Pro Tempore," said Representative John. "I am grateful for the opportunity to take on this responsibility and continue serving the people of Richland County and the 76th District in a new capacity. I look forward to continuing to work alongside Speaker Huffman and my fellow members to advance policies that strengthen our communities, support Ohio families, and move our state forward."

Representative John also expressed her congratulations to Speaker Huffman on his re-election and looks forward to working with House leadership and fellow members to continue delivering results for Ohioans. The official swearing in of new members and leadership positions will occur during opening day in January.

Orchestra to present Holiday Prelude

The Renaissance Performing Arts Association invites the community to celebrate the season with the Mansfield Symphony Youth Orchestra (MSYO) in its annual Holiday Prelude concert on Sunday, Dec. 13, at 3:30 pm at the Renaissance Theatre.

Under the direction of Stephen Domka, these talented student musicians, representing twelve counties across the region, will perform fresh, joyful arrangements of holiday favorites alongside beloved orchestral classics. Featuring a blend of timeless melodies and spirited surprises, the program highlights the talent, dedication, and artistry of North Central Ohio's next generation of musicians.

"The Holiday Prelude holds a special place in my heart. Families share in the wonder of their young musicians playing on a professional stage, and our students get to see firsthand that their music can spread the magic of the season to an entire audience." said Chelsie Thompson, President & CEO of the Renaissance Performing Arts Association. "That moment of realizing your gift can bring joy to others is something they will carry with them long after these concerts are over."

Prospect Park's Jingle & Mingle tradition moves to The Grotto Hall

The highly anticipated "Jingle & Mingle in the Prospect Park Neighborhood" community celebration is officially back for its third year. The free event is moving to a new, larger venue at The Grotto Hall, 747 S. Main St., Mansfield.

Families, friends and neighbors are invited to gather on Saturday, Dec. 5, from 11 am to 3 pm for a celebration of the winter season.

This annual tradition is brought to the community by Kingdom Grace Fellowship Church, Richland County Children Services, First English Lutheran Church and Zoe's Learning Center.

"What started as a neighborhood gathering has blossomed into a hallmark holiday event. The move to The Grotto Hall ensures that organizers can deliver an even more magical experience for children and families, keeping the tradition 100% free and open to everyone," said Renea Collins, founder/senior pastor of Kingdom Grace Church & Zoe's Learning Center.

"Attendees can look forward to a welcoming atmosphere filled with community fellowship, smiling faces and plenty of holiday cheer."

The day will be filled with free food, music, games and gifts. Santa and Mrs. Claus and The Grinch will attend.

At the holiday celebration, organizations and businesses will be giving away special gifts and information to spread cheer.

"The holiday community celebration is just one more example of community partners coming together building relationships and bringing hope to the children and families we serve in our community, " said Brigitte Coles, community engagement supervisor for Richland County Children Services.

For more information contact Beth Ferguson, community development/co-organizer Kingdom Grace Fellowship Church, at 567-303-4213 or 419-522-0908.

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Lexington approves hirings

The Lexington Board of Education met Wednesday, Nov. 18.

Lexington Junior High Student Representative John Bartone was in attendance. The board approved a resolution authorizing the extension of the Ohio School Consortium Master Supply Agreement to continue with Direct Energy (through META Consortium) as electricity provider effective July 2027 through June 2030.

Sally Hale was hired as the after school director/tutor of the "Afterburner" program during the 2026–'27 school year. Gabe Sanchez was approved as the fifth grade Academic Challenge advisor for the current school year.

A salary adjustments was approved for Zoe Creeger, BS to ME.

Resignations were accepted from Amy Cleland, educational aide; and Brenda Mack, transportation.

Employment was grahted to Tammy Pitt, substitute educational aide; and Anna Tomlinson, substitute educational aide (Renhill 1:1).

Melanie Walker resigned as the freshman cheer coach. Aubrey Beauford was approved as a volunteer cheer coach and Cara Pfeiffer was approved as the head varsity softball coach.

Mike Moore was approved as the strength/conditioning coach, Nov. 2026 through January 2027

Rick Fisher was approved as an athletics volunteer and parent/building volunteers included Jenna Brown, Debbie Levingston and Morgan Pauley.

In Lieu of Transportation payments were approved for Lexington students attending Temple Christian School.

The board approved a resolution accepting fiscal year '27 MOESC Client District Initiative Funding in the amount of $12,088.25.17.

Substitute lists were approved as provided by MOESC dated Nov. 19–Dec. 15.

News Briefs in Education

Local students were among more than 550 first-year students welcomed to the Baldwin Wallace University campus this fall who earned more than $10.9 million in scholarships for their outstanding high school achievements.

Darbie Broom, a graduate of Ontario High School, majoring in hospitality, tourism and event management, earned a $22,000 President's Scholarship. Kailey Hale, a graduate of Ontario High School, majoring in psychology and pre-allied health/pre-physical therapy, earned a $22,000 President's Scholarship.

Emma Reynolds, a graduate of Madison Comprehensive High School, majoring in communication sciences and disorders, earned a $22,000 President's Scholarship. Bella Temple, a graduate of Lexington High School, majoring in nursing, earned a $22,000 President's Scholarship.

Michael Ward, a graduate of Ontario High School, majoring in adolescent and young adult education and English integrated language arts, earned a $22,000 President's Scholarship. Kristi Yeager, a graduate of Plymouth High School, majoring in sport management, earned a $20,000 Trustees' Scholarship.

BW's merit scholarships are awarded to full-time students and are renewable for up to four years, provided they maintain good academic and social standing. BW offers a wide range of financial support to its students — more than $53.6 million for the 2026-2027 academic year.

★

Ross Kuhn, a graduate of Crestview High School, has been named to the 2026 summer trimester Dean's List at Palmer College of Chiropractic's Main Campus in Davenport, Iowa.





KROC CENTER volunteers from the 2025 Christmas Assistance Program came together at The Salvation Army Ashland Kroc Center to help make the holidays brighter for local families.

Ashland's Kroc Center invites community to make Christmas brighter for local families

The Salvation Army Ray & Joan Kroc Corps Community Center is inviting the community to help local families experience the comfort, hope and joy of Christmas.

There are several ways to make a difference this holiday season, whether its by adopting an Angel Tree participant, volunteering during Christmas Distribution, ringing a bell for the Red Kettle campaign or making a financial contribution through the Virtual Red Kettle.

"Christmas is a special time to come together as a community and remind our neighbors that they are not alone," said Major Billy Francis, Corps Officer and Kroc Administrator. "Every gift, every hour volunteered and every act of kindness helps bring hope to someone who may be facing a difficult season."

The Angel Tree program provides an opportunity for individuals, families, churches and businesses to make Christmas brighter for local children. By adopting an Angel Tree participant, donors help provide gifts that bring smiles, create treasured memories, and remind children that their community cares. Community members interested in adopting can find participating Angel Trees at the Ashland Walmart store and The Ashland Kroc Center.

Volunteers are needed to help prepare and distribute Christmas assistance to local families. Those interested in volunteering for Christmas distribution can sign-up at https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0B44AEAA2BA3FCC16-66266133-christmas

Individuals, families, businesses, church groups, schools and community organizations are encouraged to volunteer as Red Kettle bell-ringers. No experience is necessary — just a willingness to share a little joy with others.

Bell-ringing volunteer opportunities are available at https://volunteer.eastern.salvationarmyusa.org/

For those who prefer to give online, the Virtual Red Kettle offers a convenient way to support The Salvation Army's local Christmas efforts. Every contribution, no matter the size, helps provide assistance and hope to neighbors in need. Secure online donation is available at https://salarmy.us/AshlandRedKettle

"Joy isn't measured by the size of a gift, but by the difference it makes in someone's life," added Francis. "When we give together, we remind our neighbors that they are valued, supported, and part of a caring community."

This Christmas, The Salvation Army invites everyone to find a way to give that is meaningful to them. Whether it's a gift for a child, a few hours of service, a shift at a Red Kettle, or a financial contribution, every act of generosity helps create a ripple of joy throughout Ashland County.

For more information about Christmas assistance and opportunities to support The Salvation Army Ashland Kroc Center visit the center at 527 E. Liberty St. in Ashland or follow Ashland Kroc Center on Facebook or @AshlandKroc on Instagram.

Mayor's Holiday Beautification Award nominations due by Dec. 7

The City of Mansfield reminds residents, local businesses and nonprofit organizations that nominations are open for the December Mayor's Holiday Beautification Award, which recognizes properties that showcase the holiday spirit and help make Mansfield a brighter, more festive place during the holiday season.

First introduced in June, the Mayor's Beautification Award honors those who take pride in improving the appearance of our community. Monthly awards have recognized landscaping, exterior improvements, and property upkeep. December's award will celebrate holiday decorations, festive displays and seasonal creativity.

The City of Mansfield encourages everyone to participate by nominating a neighbor, local business or organization whose holiday decorations spread seasonal cheer throughout our community.

Local businesses, nonprofit organizations and individual residents are eligible to be nominated.

The award recipients will receive public recognition at the December 15 City Council meeting, a certificate from Mayor Perry and an award yard sign.

Nominations need to include the name of the business, organization or resident property address, contact person, phone number, email address of the contact person and photos highlighting the holiday decorations or display.

Email nominations to tgermann@mansfieldohio.gov by Dec. 7.

Senate passes Brenner Bill banning DEI policies in public schools

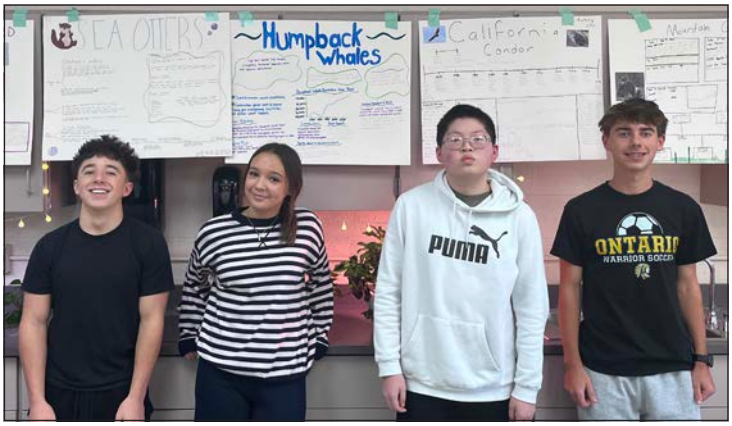
The Ohio Senate passed Senate Bill 113, sponsored by Senator Andrew Brenner (R-Delaware), which prohibits the adoption and enforcement of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) policies in public schools and creates a complaint process for alleged violations.

"Everyone should be judged by their character, not whether they check a box," Senator Brenner said. "This bill prioritizes ability over identity and equality of opportunity instead of fitting into a category. I look forward to seeing the positive effect this policy will have in our schools throughout Ohio."

The legislation requires public school systems to enact policies that prohibit DEI training courses, DEI offices or departments, and the use of DEI in hiring practices. Additionally, the bill prohibits schools from replacing DEI programs with alternative ones serving the same purpose or using similar means.

A complaint process for alleged violations must be established in each public school and comply with standards adopted by the Department of Education and Workforce.

The bill is now pending in the Ohio House for further consideration.



MRS. WELCH'S Environmental Science students at Ontario High School independently researched animals that have been brought back from the brink of extinction for their "Wildlife Comeback" poster project. They investigated how an entire ecosystem can be affected by the decline of a single species, demonstrating the interconnectedness of nature.



•NECIC opens GROW

(Continued from Front Page)

Park National Bank, which runs through Dec. 31. A free trail passport can be picked-up at GROW by NECIC. There is a list of stops and instructions for entering the drawing and voting. Community members can visit participating North End businesses to see gingerbread men decorated by local businesses and organizations for a chance to win a GROW by NECIC gift card. Vote for your favorite gingerbread man, and the business or organization whose entry receives the most votes will also win a separate GROW by NECIC gift card.

On Sunday there was live music by Standard Time Jazz and free mac and cheese and soul food samples from Big D's Soul-B-Q and Chef Niko Courey.

The North End Community Improvement Collaborative works alongside residents and partners to improve quality of life in Mansfield's North End through community organizing, urban agriculture, workforce development and neighborhood investment.

Mansfield author Henry J. Koncza will hold book signing on Dec. 6

Mansfield singer-songwriter and author Henry J. Konczak will hold a book signing for his first young adult novel, *Maggie Parsons and the Nashville Slam*, on Sunday, Dec. 6 at noon at Hickory Vines Winery & Venue, 1745 Hickory Ln., in Mansfield.

Konczak will sign copies of the book, talk with readers about the story and its musical roots and bring along his acoustic guitar to play a few songs.

Maggie Parsons and the Nashville Slam follows a 17-year-old songwriter who earns a chance to compete in Nashville. Contestants are paired with musicians they have never met, given one hour to write a brand-new song together and then must perform it live.

Maggie quickly discovers she is competing against seasoned musicians. When a producer tells her that her guitar playing needs to improve, she turns for help to a once-famous blues musician she meets while performing at a nursing home.

What begins as a songwriting competition becomes a story about music, friendship, fear, ambition and finding the courage to keep going when you are not sure you belong.

The novel grew out of characters and ideas Konczak first developed years ago for an unfinished screenplay titled Open Mic. A longtime musician and video producer, Konczak has spent much of his life performing and telling stories in north-central Ohio.

Konczak recently taped an interview about the novel for WMFD-TV's Sittin' Down with Kelby King. The interview is scheduled to air Dec. 2 at 9 pm.

Maggie Parsons and the Nashville Slam is available now in paperback and Kindle editions on Amazon.

View & Print Past Issues at www.tribune-courier.com

Mansfield Public Art Commission and MRCPL announce black history celebration art exhibition

The Mansfield Public Art Commission, in collaboration with the Mansfield/Richland County Public Library, is inviting artists from Mansfield and surrounding communities to submit artwork for an upcoming exhibition presented in conjunction with the library's annual black history celebration, Saturday, Feb. 6, at the main library.

The exhibition will be on display Jan. 18 through March 26 at the main library.

The exhibition is open to original two-dimensional artwork in all media, including painting, drawing, printmaking, photography, collage, mixed media and fiber arts suitable for wall display.

The exhibition provides an opportunity to showcase the diverse artistic talent within our region while bringing the community together through art and the celebration of black history, culture and contributions.

Artists may submit up to three pieces for consideration. All works must be original and ready for installation with wires or brackets. Original art may be listed for sale or not for sale. Any art sales will be communicated directly to the artist, and the Public Art Commission and Library will not take any commission to facilitate the sale.

The submission deadline is Jan. 8. Artists will be notified via email during the week of Jan. 11 regarding accepted artwork. Submit artwork at https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSd9OAExTW_R8OwcVxVs2kMyomLUUXOvoWyfRJ5QaMBeojWXhQ/viewform.



STUDENTS IN MRS. RHODES' culinary fundamentals class at Ontario High School have been learning about the nutritional aspect and benefits of beans and legumes. They had the opportunity to create their own chili recipe through recipe development and compete against other lab groups for best chili, hottest chili and most unique chili with staff members as judges.

Study identifies opportunities to strengthen Ohio's digital infrastructure

The Ohio Chamber of Commerce today released a new study examining the Ohio Internet Exchange (Ohio IX) and outlining how Ohio can strengthen its internet infrastructure to better support businesses and remain competitive in an increasingly digital economy.

Commissioned by the Ohio Chamber Research Foundation, The Case for Investing in Ohio IX examines the exchange's current capabilities, opportunities to expand its reach and the investments needed to position it for future growth.

"Digital infrastructure is becoming just as important to Ohio's competitiveness as our roads, bridges, energy and water systems," said Ohio Chamber President & CEO Steve Stivers. "Businesses across our state depend on reliable, high-performance connectivity to operate, serve their customers and compete. We want to make sure Ohio has the infrastructure in place to support those needs as technology continues to evolve."

An internet exchange allows different networks to connect and exchange internet traffic directly. Ohio IX helps keep more of that traffic within the state rather than routing it through out-of-state hubs, improving efficiency and potentially reducing costs for participating networks.

The study finds that Ohio IX has an established foundation, with 61 member networks across 16 facilities. Its switching capacity has grown 244% since 2019. The exchange also supports access networks reaching approximately 4.5 million Ohio households and 155,000 businesses across 83 counties.

The report estimates that Ohio IX generates approximately $2.5 million in annual savings on internet transit costs for Ohio internet service providers using the exchange, compared with approximately $100,000 in total annual membership fees.

Despite that progress, the study identifies opportunities to expand Ohio IX's membership, strengthen its operations and extend its reach beyond central Ohio. In particular, attracting more content providers, cloud companies and enterprise members could help the exchange better support the growing demand for hybrid cloud computing and artificial intelligence applications.

The study outlines a phased approach to building on Ohio IX's existing capabilities. Recommendations include adding dedicated technical and business development staff, expanding infrastructure and connectivity to other Ohio markets and attracting new network members. The report also examines potential funding and partnership opportunities to support that growth.

The study was discussed during a press conference at the Ohio Chamber of Commerce featuring leaders from the Ohio Chamber, JobsOhio and BroadbandOhio. View the full report at https://ohiochamberfoundation.com/projects/the-case-for-investing-in-ohio-ix/

The Ohio Chamber is the state's leading business advocate and represents thousands of companies that do business in Ohio. Our mission is to aggressively champion free enterprise, economic competitiveness and growth for the benefit of all Ohioans.



LEXINGTON EASTERN ELEMENTARY recently honored the brave men and women who have served our country during a special Veterans Day assembly. Among those recognized was Eastern teacher Lindsey Brokaw, who served in the U.S. Air Force and Ohio Air National Guard for more than 20 years. Junior high teacher Mr. Morrow, who retired after 22 years of service in the Ohio Air National Guard, is pictured with student, Park, and his father, George, a retired U.S. Marine and Ohio Army National Guardsman. George shared his experiences with Park's history class, giving students a firsthand perspective on military service and the significance of Veterans Day.

Rep. John votes in support of legislation to help strengthen work zone safety

State Representative Marilyn John recently voted in support of House Bill 82, the Trenton Gallaway Work Zone Safety Act, legislation to strengthen penalties for certain traffic violations in construction zones and improve protections for Ohio's highway workers.

"Ohio's construction workers put themselves in harm's way every day to maintain and improve our roads and highways. We have a responsibility to help ensure they can do their jobs safely and return home to their families. House Bill 82 reinforces the importance of slowing down, paying attention, and exercising caution when traveling through construction zones. I was proud to support this legislation and its efforts to protect the men and women working along our roadways," said Rep. John.

House Bill 82 works to increase fines by up to $100 for reckless driving violations committed in a marked construction zone when one or more construction workers are present, allow individuals to complete an approved driving safety course within 90 days of a reckless driving violation in lieu of paying the additional fine, establish additional fines and penalties for individuals who fail to complete the required driving safety course and authorize courts to impose double fines for speeding violations in construction zones when one or more construction workers are present.

According to the Ohio State Highway Patrol's Work Zone Dashboard, more than 25,600 crashes occurred in Ohio construction zones between 2021 and November 2026, with construction workers present in approximately 35 percent of those crashes.

House Bill 82 is named in honor of Trenton Gallaway and recognizes the importance of protecting the individuals who work to maintain and improve Ohio's transportation infrastructure.

"Trenton Galloway was a beloved member of our community who lost his life while working on a road crew," said Rep. John.

House Bill 82 passed the Ohio House on November 10 and now heads to the Ohio Senate for further consideration.

Ohio Farm Bureau opposes eminent domain expansion

Ohio Farm Bureau is urging state lawmakers to protect the rights of Ohio farmers and landowners as discussion continues over expanding eminent domain authority for public utilities.

The proposed expansion of quick take, also known as deposit and build, could allow utility companies to take possession of private property and begin construction for infrastructure supporting data centers and other development projects before a landowner has the opportunity to fully challenge the taking or have fair compensation determined through traditional judicial process.

"Ohio farmers and landowners should not have to fight to protect their property while a utility company is already building on it," said Ohio Farm Bureau President Bill Patterson. "For generations, farmers and landowners have worked to build and preserve their land, and they deserve more than a process that puts the interests of utility companies ahead of their rights. Eminent domain is already a difficult process for families in Ohio. Giving these companies even more authority to take property without a full and fair process is simply unacceptable."

Ohio Farm Bureau recognizes the importance of infrastructure investment and economic development across the state. These projects, however, would come at the expense of established private property rights and remove the ability of landowners to challenge whether a taking is necessary and serves a public use.

The organization has consistently opposed expanding quick take authority and continues to advocate for stronger protections for property owners through the eminent domain process.

As lawmakers consider potential changes, Ohio Farm Bureau is encouraging members, farmers, landowners and interested parties to contact their elected officials through a new action alert and ask lawmakers to oppose any expansion of quick-take authority.

Learn more and take action at ofb.ag/quicktake.





EAGLE SCOUT OWEN ENGLISH built a flag drop box for proper disposal of flags. It is located at the Elks in Lexington, 320 East Main St., Lexington. The box is for flags that are worn, faded, torn or no longer in a condition to be flown. A dedication of the box and flag retirement ceremony was held Wednesday, Nov. 11.



Mechanics Bank named Ohio Bankers League Bank of the Year

The Ohio Bankers League (OBL) has named Mechanics Bank, headquartered in Mansfield, Ohio, as its 2026 Bank of the Year in the category of banks with more than $500 million in assets. The award recognizes financial institutions that demonstrate exceptional leadership, strategic growth, community involvement and a commitment to strengthening the communities they serve.

Founded in 1886, Mechanics Bank has spent 140 years building relationships and investing in the communities of North Central Ohio. Despite significant changes throughout the banking industry, the independently operated community bank has remained committed to its founding principles, maintaining a strong local presence while continuing to evolve to meet the needs of its customers.

One of the bank's most notable accomplishments has been its strategic expansion into Ashland County. The expansion represented an important milestone for the institution, allowing the bank to extend its relationship-based approach to banking while investing in a new community.

"Mechanics Bank is an outstanding example of how community banks can grow, innovate and expand their reach without losing sight of what makes them special," said Michael Adelman, President and CEO of the Ohio Bankers League. "For 140 years, Mechanics Bank has demonstrated a commitment to its customers, employees and communities that goes well beyond traditional banking services. We are pleased to recognize the entire Mechanics Bank team for the leadership and dedication that earned them this distinction."

The bank's guiding principle, "It's All About People," is reflected in its approach to serving customers, supporting employees and contributing to the communities it calls home. Through its continued investment in people and places, Mechanics Bank demonstrates that community banking is about more than financial services. It is about building relationships that last and helping communities move forward.

Mechanics Bank's recognition as OBL's 2026 Bank of the Year highlights the important role community banks play in Ohio's economy and the lasting impact they make across the state.

The Ohio Bankers League congratulates Mark Masters, the Mechanics Bank leadership team and all of the bank's employees on this well-deserved recognition.

The Ohio Bankers League is the trade association for the Ohio banking industry – and is Ohio's only organization focused on meeting the needs of all banks and thrifts in the Buckeye State. For more than 125 years, the OBL has been the voice of the Ohio banking industry fostering a cooperation that has made it one of the strongest and most reputable financial trade associations in the country. By linking banks, bankers, and industry experts – and by pooling their intellectual and capital resources – the OBL serves as a powerful creator of knowledge and collective resources. The non-profit association is comprised of 174 FDIC-insured financial institutions including commercial banks, savings banks, and savings and loan associations ranging in size from just over $13 million in assets to more than $4 trillion.





THE COMMUNITY came together for Richland County Children Services' 2nd Annual Thanksgiving food bag and turkey giveaway, distributing holiday meals to 546 households and serving 1,577 individuals across Richland County. This event is possible through the partnership of Richland County Children Services, Richland County Youth and Family Council, Ohio District 5 Area Agency on Aging, Inc., Mansfield Police Department and Mid-Ohio Educational Service Center.

American Cancer Society celebrates 50 years of the Great American Smokeout

Fifty years ago, the American Cancer Society (ACS) launched the Great American Smokeout to encourage people to quit smoking and take a step toward a healthier future. On Thursday, Nov. 19, the ACS marked the 50th annual Great American Smokeout. The milestone offers an opportunity to celebrate five decades of progress against tobacco while confronting a growing concern: hard-won public health gains could go up in smoke without renewed action.

"The Great American Smokeout is not just an opportunity for people who use tobacco to set a plan to quit. It's also a clear wake-up call for lawmakers to say it's time for Ohio to stand up to Big Tobacco," said Leo Almeida, ACS CAN regional government relations director. "For too long, Ohio has allowed the tobacco industry to addict people to deadly, cancer-causing products. It's time to say, 'enough is enough.' Our residents deserve better."

Research shows that strong tobacco control policies, like regularly and significantly increasing all tobacco taxes and having a well-funded, fact-based tobacco control program, are effective in helping people quit. Fewer people using tobacco products means less suffering and death from tobacco-related diseases like cancer.

"Now more than ever, as Big Tobacco uses e-cigarettes and nicotine pouches to addict the next generation and make it more difficult for people to quit, state lawmakers must prioritize investing in best practice tobacco control programs, said Almeida. "Additionally, lawmakers should pass legislation during their next session to raise the tax on cigarettes by $1.50 per pack with a parallel tax on all other tobacco products. Increasing tobacco taxes is one of the most effective ways to support cessation and reduce tobacco use."

Smoking rates have declined dramatically over the past 50 years, saving millions of lives. That progress, however, is not guaranteed. The policies and public health programs that helped reduce tobacco use are facing new challenges, while cigarettes are once again being portrayed as stylish, nostalgic and culturally relevant in entertainment and on social media.

A new report from ACS CAN, titled The #Toxic Smoking Aesthetic, examines cigarette-related content on TikTok and Instagram. The report finds that a toxic smoking aesthetic is making cigarettes seem appealing to a new generation of young women and girls, while concealing the harms.

ACS CAN has also raised concerns about the erosion of tobacco control infrastructure, the continued authorization of new flavored tobacco products by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and the re-glamorization of tobacco across television, movies and online content.

"As we mark 50 years of the Great American Smokeout, we should be celebrating how far we've come while recognizing that we cannot take this progress for granted," said Almeida. "We need sustained investment in tobacco prevention and cessation, along with science-based policies that protect our communities and future generations."

Across Ohio, tobacco use is still the leading preventable cause of disease and death, and smoking is linked to at least 12 types of cancers, including lung, liver and colorectal cancers. Each year, 20,200 Ohioans die from a smoking-related disease. Although these hazards are well established, data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) show 15% of adults in Ohio smoke. These products are highly addictive, and it can be difficult for people to quit using tobacco once they have started.

Smoking causes approximately 20% of all cancers and approximately 30% of all cancer deaths in the United States. Tobacco use also damages nearly every organ in the body and increases the risk of serious diseases affecting the heart, lungs, blood vessels and other systems.

The good news is that quitting smoking has immediate and long-term health benefits. Heart rate begins to drop within minutes of quitting. Over time, coughing and shortness of breath decrease, the risk of heart attack drops, and the risks of several cancers decline.

Free resources on quitting tobacco are available through the American Cancer Society's cessation program, Empowered to Quit or at the Ohio Tobacco Quit Line.

Mansfield Symphony Orchestra and Chorus to ring in the season

The Mansfield Symphony Orchestra and the Mansfield Symphony Chorus return to the Renaissance Theatre for Holiday Pops on Saturday, Dec. 19 at 7:30 pm.

Under the direction of Music Director Octavio Más-Arocas, the orchestra presents a festive program that blends timeless holiday classics with joyful new arrangements.

The Mansfield Symphony Chorus, led by Chorus Master Jacob Poiner, joins the orchestra to fill the theatre with the beloved carols and spirited seasonal favorites that make this concert a highlight of the holidays.

And for the youngest guests (and the young at heart), Santa Claus will be stopping by the Renaissance to help celebrate the season.

"Holiday Pops is one of those nights our community comes back to year after year," said Chelsie Thompson, Renaissance Theatre President & CEO.

"Grandparents bring grandkids, friends make it their holiday night out, and everyone leaves a little more ready for Christmas. We're so grateful to share it with our neighbors again."

Holiday Pops is part of the OhioHealth Symphony Series and Christmas at the Ren brought to you by Hudson & Essex, the Renaissance's celebration of the holiday season, which includes Richland Academy of the Arts' The Nutcracker Ballet on Dec. 5 and 6, "We Wish You a Jazzy Christmas" featuring the Artistic Jazz Orchestra on Dec. 12, and the Youth Orchestra: Holiday Prelude on Dec. 13.

The mission of the Mansfield Symphony Orchestra is to provide a quality symphonic experience that engages musicians, patrons, and youth alike. Under the creative direction of Octavio Más-Arocas, the Symphony brings together talented musicians from Mansfield and across the greater Ohio region. The Symphony returns to the Renaissance on Saturday, Feb. 27 with Side × Side "New World Voices," featuring the Youth Orchestra.

Holiday Pops is made possible with support from Ohio Eye Associates and Jay and Amy Goyal.

Reserved seating for Holiday Pops starts at $20, and the Date Night Package can be added to any pair of seats for $10.

The Renaissance Theatre is located at 138 Park Avenue West in Mansfield. Tickets are available through the Renaissance Box Office, Tuesday through Friday from noon to 5 pm, by calling 419-522-2726, or online at rentickets.org.

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Tribune-Courier Sports Highlights

SHELBY VS CLEAR FORK REGIONAL FINALS · NOV. 20
SHELBY WINS 14–7 · PHOTOS BY JEFF HOFFER











Tribune-Courier Sports Highlights

Shelby Whippets claim regional final against Clear Fork

By Kris Leiter

Confession is good for the soul and I'll admit that I'm an OHSAA bracket addict. I often scour the sports scores to see if my favorite teams have won. And as the post-season brackets were posted, I recently snuck a peek and thought "Wouldn't it be cool if Shelby and Clear Fork ended up playing each other."

This exact scenario played out this past Friday at Arlin Field in Mansfield as the two conference MOAC rivals tangled for a regional title and the chance to move to the state semifinals.

This brought together two great teams, one awesome location and one crazy, on the-edge-of-your-seat-suspenseful game!

You could not have asked for a better location. Arlin Field is Mansfield Senior's crown jewel. This is a one-of-a-kind fortress, carved out in the "urban scenery" of Mansfield. The 12,000-seat, 80-year-old stadium has played host to many post-season gridiron battles.

Both the Shelby Whippets and Clear Fork Colts came in strong, but the Whippets left with their 13th win (14–7) and the regional title.

Shelby finished with a total of 328 yards, 179 rushing, 149 passing. Clear Fork finished with 228 total yards, 124 rushing, 104 passing.

The win gives Shelby the title for the third time. Wins in 2017 and 2025 also gave them trips to the state semifinals.

The Whippets will embark down the road Friday with an opponent they have never faced before. They will tangle with the Urbana Hillclimbers in the state-semi this Friday at Marion Harding's OhioHealth Field.

Urbana is mirroring a similar scenario as Shelby, beating their conference opponent by defeating their long-time Central Buckeye Conference rival, 35–31 last Friday in Marysville. The Hillclimbers were trailing 31–21 in the fourth quarter with 1:30 remaining but scored fourteen points in the final minutes to win!

Urbana brings a stout roster of nineteen upperclassmen to the table.

Division IV — Region 14

Marion Harding High School, Friday, Nov. 27, 7 pm

Urbana (11–3) vs Shelby 2 seed (13–0)

I would encourage you to get there early as Marion's visiting bleachers are smaller than most stadiums. The Whippets will be designated the visiting team.

The state championship will be held Saturday, Dec. 5, 7:30 pm at Canton's Fawcett Hall of Fame Stadium.









Photos By Jeff Hoffer

Classifieds

ADVERTISEMENT FOR BID

Sealed bids for Gasoline and Diesel Fuel for January 1, 2027, through December 31, 2027, will be opened at 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday, December 8th, 2026 by Michael Morton, Service-Safety Director of the City of Ontario.

Specifications may be obtained electronically from the Service-Safety Director. Email a request to servicesafetydirector@ontarioohio.org, or a paper copy is available at the City of Ontario Municipal Building, 555 Stumbo Road, Ontario, Ohio 44906.

All bids should be sealed in an envelope, clearly marked: 2027 GASOLINE & DIESEL FUEL BID, the name of the Bidder, and include a CERTIFIED CHECK OR BOND on a solvent bank, in the amount of One Hundred Dollars ($100.00).

The City of Ontario reserves the right to reject any or all bids. Check or Bond on rejected bids will be returned promptly, and on accepted bids, the same will be retained until the contracts are consummated.

Michael Morton
Service-Safety Director
Ontario, Ohio
(T-C 11-12, 26 '26) 31

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice of voluntary dissolution of Richland Engineering Limited, an Ohio limited partnership association. To all creditors and claimants of Richland Engineering Limited.

Notice is hereby given that Richland Engineering Limited, an Ohio Limited partnership association, whose principal office is located at Richland County, Ohio, has filed a Certificate of Dissolution and is winding up its business.

Jerod M. Them,
Attorney, Weldon, Huston & Keyser, L.L.P
Mansfield, Ohio
(T-C 10-22, 29, 11-5, 12, 19, 26 '26) 16L

LEGAL NOTICE

The following is a succinct summary of the legislation adopted by the Council of the City of Ontario, at their special meeting held on November 9, 2026.

The complete text of this Ordinance may be viewed and copies obtained at the Office of the Clerk of Council, Ontario Municipal Building, 555 Stumbo Road, Ontario, Ohio, during regular business hours.

RESOLUTION NO. 26-22 – A RESOLUTION DECLARING THE OFFICIAL INTENT AND REASONABLE EXPECTATION OF THE CITY OF ONTARIO ON BEHALF OF THE STATE OF OHIO (THE BORROWER) TO REIMBURSE ITS 501 WATERWORKS FUND FOR THE CP13AC / CP14AC, MAPLE LANE AND LEXINGTON SPRINGMILL WATERLINE LOOPING AND REPLACEMENT WITH THE PROCEEDS OF TAX EXEMPT DEBT OF THE STATE OF OHIO.

RESOLUTION NO. 26-23 – GIVING CONSENT OF THE CITY FOR THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION TO REMOVE SNOW AND ICE AND USE SNOW AND ICE CONTROL MATERIAL ON STATE HIGHWAYS INSIDE THE CITY CORPORATE LIMITS AND AUTHORIZING THE CITY TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH THE STATE OF OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FOR SNOW AND ICE REMOVAL; AND GIVING CONSENT OF THE CITY FOR THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION TO PERFORM CERTAIN MAINTENANCE AND/OR REPAIR ON STATE HIGHWAYS INSIDE THE CITY CORPORATION AND AUTHORIZING THE CITY TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH THE STATE OF OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FOR CERTAIN MAINTENANCE AND/OR REPAIR.

RESOLUTION NO. 26-24 – A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR OR HIS DESIGNEE (SERVICE-SAFETY DIRECTOR) TO PREPARE AND SUBMIT AN APPLICATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM (TAP) GRANT ADMINISTERED BY THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION THROUGH THE FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

ORDINANCE NO. 26-28 – AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE 26-08 KNOWN AS THE PERMANENT APPROPRIATIONS ORDINANCE FOR 2026 BY MAKING ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS IN THE GENERAL FUND, SPECIAL REVENUE FUND, THE ENTERPRISE FUND, INTERNAL SERVICE FUND, AND EMPLOYEE DEDUCTIONS FUND.

Abbey Beaver
Clerk of Council
Ontario, Ohio
(T-C 11-19, 26 '26) 74L

CITY OF ONTARIO
GENERAL LABORER POSITION

The City of Ontario, an Equal Opportunity Employer, currently has an opening for a General Laborer in the Service Department. The current opening is in the Streets Department, the test will also be used for future openings in the Water, Sewer, Parks and Maintenance Departments.

A valid driver's license is required. Please visit ontarioohio.org for a full job description. We offer an excellent benefits package.

Applications are available at the Ontario Municipal Building, 555 Stumbo Road, Ontario, Ohio, or online at www.ontarioohio.org and must be returned by 10:00 a.m. on December 9, 2026. Applications may be returned by email to civilservice@ontarioohio.org or in a sealed envelope addressed to the Civil Service Commission-General Laborer Position. The Civil Service exam will be held Sunday, December 13, 2026, 9:00 a.m., doors open at 8:30 a.m., at the Ontario Municipal Building Community Room, 555 Stumbo Road, Ontario, Ohio, 44906.

The City of Ontario is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on any basis prohibited by law including military status. However, if you are applying for a civil service examination and elect to claim military service credit either as an honorably discharged veteran or as a member of the National Guard or a Reserve component as provided in R.C. 124.23, then please attach a copy of your honorable discharge from active duty, DD 214 or other proof of eligibility for this credit.

Abbey Beaver
Clerk of Council
Ontario, Ohio
(T-C 11-26, 12-3 '26) 46L

CITY OF ONTARIO
OFFICE PERSONNEL
CIVIL SERVICE EXAM

The City of Ontario, an Equal Opportunity Employer, currently has an opening for an Office Personnel position in the Tax Department. Duties include, but not limited to, preparing and analyzing tax records and reports and assist in administering day-to-day operations of the tax department. This position requires skills in general office duties such as data entry, customer service, phone calls, cash and credit card handling, Word, Excel and general clerical work. The successful applicant must be bondable. We offer an excellent benefit package.

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Abbey Beaver
Clerk of Council
Ontario, Ohio
(T-C 11-26, 12-3 '26) 50L

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

SPRINGFIELD TOWNSHIP
ZONING COMMISSION
RICHLAND COUNTY, OHIO

Notice is hereby given that the Springfield Township Zoning Commission will hold a public hearing on Thursday, December 10, at 6:00 pm at the Springfield Township Hall, located at 3800 Park Avenue West, Ontario, Ohio 44906.

The purpose of this public hearing is to consider an application for an amendment to the Springfield Township Zoning Resolution (Rezoning) initiated and filed by the property owner, Dan and Brenda Niss under Case Number 2026-RZ-01.

The applicant is requesting a change in the zoning district classification from its current designation to a proposed designation for the following described property:

•Property Location/Address: 920 Earick Rd, Mansfield, Ohio 44903 [Southwest quadrant of US 30 and W Fourth St]
•Parcel Identification Number(s): 0372804812002, 0372804812001, 0372804112000, 0372802113000, and 0372800713000
•Total Acreage: 24.07 Acres
•Current Zoning District: R-1 Low-Density Residential
•Proposed Zoning District: B-1 Business
•Proposed Land Use: Unknown

After the conclusion of the hearing, the matter will be submitted to the board of township trustees for its action.

The application, along with all accompanying text, maps, and plans, is available for public examination for a period of at least ten (10) days prior to the hearing. Documents may be reviewed at the Springfield Township Hall located at 3800 Park Avenue West, Ontario, Ohio 44906 by appointment. For appointments, please contact Springfield Township Zoning Inspector at 419-529-4416 Ext. 117.

All interested persons residing in, owning property in, or affected by the proposed amendment will be given an opportunity to be heard or submit comments in support of or in opposition to the request at the time and place noted above. Written comments may also be submitted prior to the hearing by mailing or delivering them to:
Springfield Township Zoning Department, Attn: Michael Morton, PO Box 133, Ontario, Ohio 44862

By Order of the Springfield Township
Zoning Commission.
Ontario, OH
(T-C 11-26 '26) 66L

